

# Language Assistance Plan for Wiregrass Transit Authority

Date adopted: 15 June 2013

Revised: July 2016

## Purpose

The purpose of this Language Assistance Implementation Plan (hereinafter “plan”) is to meet Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA’s) requirements to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. As a subrecipient of FTA funds, this transit system is pledged to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its transit services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The FTA refers to these persons as Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

The U.S. DOT’s FTA Office of Civil Rights’ publication “*Implementing the Department of Transportation’s Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons – A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers*” was used in the preparation of this plan.

## Contents

This plan contains:

- A. Needs assessment based on the four-factor analysis
- B. Language assistance measures
- C. A staff training plan
- D. Methods for notifying LEP persons about available language assistance
- E. Methods for monitoring, evaluating and updating plan

### A. LEP Needs Assessment – the Four-Factor Analysis

#### **Factor 1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in our service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a transit program, activity, or service.**

We assessed the following information (as checked) about LEP persons to determine the number or proportion of LEP persons who might use or want to use our transit services:

GIS map showing transit service area and concentrations of LEP persons (Attachment A)

2010 US Census data

- The total number of LEP persons in our service area is 1304.
- The total eligible population in our service area is 93,813.
- The proportion of LEP persons to the total eligible service population is 1.39%.

Survey results

Reports from drivers, dispatchers, others about contact with LEP persons

Local school district data

Human Services Dept. data

Information from local organizations (religious, legal, social service, etc.) about LEP persons in our service area

Other information. Describe: Interaction with dispatching staff

#### **Factor 2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with our transit programs, activities, or services.**

We currently have no verifiable data about LEP persons in our service area that need or may need language assistance in relation to our transit services. All anecdotal evidence suggests that the need is somewhere between slight and nonexistent. We will make efforts in the future to refine this assessment.

**Factor 3. The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided to the LEP population.**

Our agency considers transit to be an important and essential part of the transportation infrastructure of our region for those citizens living within our service area.

Wiregrass Transit Authority is the public transportation provider for the City of Dothan and for Houston County and provides services to all citizens within the service area. We operate (at peak service) fifteen- buses, all of which are wheelchair accessible. We operate from 6 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday. We do not operate at nights or on weekends or on major holidays.

**Factor 4. The resources available to our transit system and the overall cost to provide language assistance.**

This agency currently has no budget line or dedicated funding to support a language assistance plan. Translation/interpreter services will be provided by current bilingual staff. All other elements of this plan are just “the cost of doing business” and are assumed as part of our operating and administrative overhead. Should demand for the services defined within this plan increase over time, we have a mechanism in place to “mesh” with the LEP of our local MPO.

**B. Language Assistance Measures**

Language measures currently used and planned to be used by our transit system to address the needs of LEP persons include the following:

- Translating key documents in the following language(s): Spanish, (these key documents are currently defined as the “Title VI complaint form” and this agency’s Title VI “Notice to the Public”
- Arranging for availability of oral translators, when needed
- Communicating with LEP persons’ groups about transit services
- Posting notices in appropriate languages informing LEP persons of available services
- Other. Describe \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Staff Training**

To ensure effective implementation of this plan, the transit system will schedule training at orientations for new staff and for all relevant employees:

- the transit system’s Language Assistance Implementation Plan
- demographic data about local LEP population
- printed LEP persons’ materials as available and appropriate
- how to handle verbal requests for transit service in a foreign language
- their responsibility to notify transit manager about any LEP persons’ unmet needs.

**D. Notice to LEP Persons about Available Language Assistance**

Our transit system plans to notify LEP persons in their own language about the language assistance available to them without cost by using the following methods:

- signs on buses
- brochures
- posters
- sending information to local organizations that work with LEP persons
- telephone messages
- local ads (newspaper, radio, TV)
- website notices
- information tables at local events, grocery stores, pharmacies, and churches
- Other, describe: One on one interaction telephonically with individuals requiring assistance as identified when they make contact with this agency.

## **E. Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating Plan**

The transit system will review this plan during its annual review with its ALDOT transit project manager by:

- assessing its effectiveness (e.g., comparing numbers of LEP persons served by year, number of requests for language assistance received during the year),
- assessing the sufficiency of staff training and budget for language assistance,
- reviewing current sources for assistance to ensure continuing availability, and
- reviewing any complaints from LEP persons or about their needs that were received during the past year.

**This plan will be reviewed by our transit system annually. Revisions of this plan will be approved or adopted by the transit system (transit manager or board) and dated accordingly.**

## **F. Dissemination of Plan**

This Language Assistance Plan is available on our website at <http://www.wiregrasstransit.org>

This plan is also available at no cost in English upon request by telephone, fax, and mail or in person. If requested to be provided in another language and it is feasible to have it translated, it shall be provided at no cost to the requester.

## **G. Contact Information**

Questions or comments about this plan may be submitted to:

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